

2009 School of Choice (SoC) Program Announcement

Open to civilian Army Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (AL&T) Workforce members who are certified for the position they currently encumber and the certification level documented on the Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB).

Open date – Jan. 23, 2009

Close date -- March 20, 2009

School of Choice review process -- March 30, 2009

Notifications made to applicants will begin -- April 2009

Classes to start no earlier than June 2009

General Information for Applicants

The SoC Program provides civilian AL&T Workforce members an opportunity to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree during duty hours and within 18-24 months. **Applicants must be certified for the position they currently encumber and the certification level documented on the ACRB to take advantage of this training opportunity.** The program allows approved applicants to keep their current position while being temporarily assigned to their SoC on a full-time basis for up to 24 months. All colleges and universities must be nationally accredited and offer degree programs in disciplines that directly support acquisition functions. The SoC Program is restricted to colleges and universities that are located within the applicants' local commuting area (no more than 50 miles). This program will fund the cost of tuition, textbooks, and laboratory fees. Travel and per diem will not be funded. Maximum funding for completion of a baccalaureate degree is \$23,000 and for a master's degree is \$31,000. **Full-time attendance is mandatory.** Full-time as defined for a baccalaureate degree is equivalent to at least 12 credit hours and a maximum of 18 credit hours per semester, and for a master's degree is equivalent to at least 9 credit hours and a maximum of 12 credit hours per semester. Failure to adhere to this requirement will be a cause for removal from the SoC Program.

Prerequisites

- ❖ Applicants pursuing a baccalaureate degree must request an official transcript from the college or university that will validate 60 credit hours of courses. This transcript must be uploaded into the AAPDS before the announcement's closing date.
- ❖ Applicants pursuing a master's degree should contact their SoC immediately to begin the registration process and to inquire about the school's requirement for Graduate Management Admission Testing or Graduate Record Examination testing. All testing and subsequent graduation fees are paid by the applicant.
- ❖ Applicants pursuing a master's degree must request an official transcript from a college or university that will validate being a graduate of a 4-year accredited college or university and with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale. This transcript must be uploaded in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS) before the announcement's closing date.

- ❖ Applicants must obtain a letter of acceptance dated within 1 year of SoC application submission deadline date from an accredited college or university, according to the standards set forth by the Department of Education.

Eligibility Requirements

- ✓ Be a full-time career civilian AL&T Workforce or Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) member who is certified for the position he or she currently encumbers and the certification level documented on the ACRB.
- ✓ Be a career GS-11 through GS-15 or equivalent bands within a Demonstration Project or the National Security Personnel System.
- ✓ Possess 60 credit hours of courses with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 academic scale -- baccalaureate degree applicants.
- ✓ Be a graduate of a 4-year accredited college or university with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 academic scale -- master's degree applicants.
- ✓ Be accepted in an education program from an accredited school.
- ✓ Provide acceptance letter dated within 1 year of SoC application submission from an accredited college or university.
- ✓ Possess degrees in business and/or acquisition-related fields. Non-acquisition-related degrees are general studies, public administration, liberal arts, and political science. Applications requesting completion of non-acquisition degrees will be denied.
- ✓ Be sure to include the entire course of study to be paid by SoC in the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and obtain supervisor approval.
- ✓ Meet all requirements as outlined in this announcement

How to Apply

The automated SoC application is located at the AAPDS. To access AAPDS, please log in at <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/>. Once you log in, click Career Acquisition Personnel & Position Management Information System (CAPP MIS). Once in CAPP MIS, select "AAPDS" and "2009 School of Choice". AAPDS will retrieve all supervisor-approved courses in the education plan section of the IDP and load them into your SoC application package. Also, you must list Acquisition Education, Training, and Experience (AET&E) as the funding source for courses to be loaded into AAPDS. **Classes can start no earlier than June 2009 or your application will be returned with a notation to correct the start date.**

Required Documents for Application

Note: Applicants will not be able to submit their application using AAPDS without entering all required documentation

- **ACRB** -- Must be current and accurate. For assistance in updating the ACRB, please contact your Regional Acquisition Career Manager (RACM) (located online at <http://asc.army.mil/organization/regional/default.cfm>). ACRBs will be reviewed for accuracy, currency, and completeness.
- **Official transcripts** -- Applicants pursuing a baccalaureate or master's degree must upload transcripts in AAPDS.

- **Resume** -- Use Office of Personnel Management guidelines, limit to 10,000 characters, and must include current job duties.
- **IDP Academic Plan** -- Each individual course requiring SoC funding must first be entered in the IDP as planned and approved by the supervisor. Applicants should pay particular attention to the proper fiscal year dates for curriculum funding. The SoC funding year runs concurrently with the fiscal year (1 October – 30 September). Applicants must choose AET&E as the planned funding source for each course listed in the IDP. Ensure that the requested degree and/or required courses are acquisition-related (business, engineering, computer science, contracting, etc). See the current Defense Acquisition University online catalog, Appendix B, for more information on educational and certification requirements within acquisition career fields. Ensure that electives you choose are job/degree-related. Electives that are not job and/or degree-related will only be funded when required by the school as part of the curriculum. Examples of non-acquisition degree-related courses are: art, history, astronomy, meteorology, and physical education. Unless required by the curriculum, these courses will not be funded.

Reminder: IDP courses will only upload into the AAPDS application if:

- Listed in Education Plan section
 - Status listed as Planned
 - AET&E listed as Planned Funding Source
 - IDP approved by the supervisor
- **Statement of Interest** -- Applicant must describe in detail of 500 words or less why SoC funding is being requested.
- **Post Utilization Plan** -- Applicant's supervisor must endorse SoC participation by IDP approval **AND** completion of the post-utilization plan.
- **Acceptance Letter** -- Must be from currently enrolled accredited college or university **AND** dated within 1 year of SoC application submission.
- **Accreditation Letter** -- Must be from an accredited college or university as defined by the Department of Education.
- **Agreement to continue in service** -- Approved SoC applicants must agree to serve in the agency three times the length of the training period and other terms and conditions as stated in the Standard Form 182 Continued Service Agreement

Additional Information

- **Applicants should contact their RACM (<http://asc.army.mil/organization/regional/default.cfm>) for any necessary application support. ACMs will only be able to view the sections of your application that you have saved.**
- Applicants will be notified if their application packet is incomplete and will have the opportunity to modify and correct information submitted before the closing date of the announcement. **Requested changes to the application after the closing date of the SoC announcement will not be honored.**
- Applicants' supervisor must approve the complete application package and provide any comments before the applicant submits the SoC package. **Supervisor approval must be completed by close of business on March 30, 2009, or the application will not be reviewed by the Review Board.**

- Applicants may also contact the SoC Programs Manager, Veronica Gonzalez, at veronica.gonzalez1@us.army.mil; commercial (703) 805-1238; or DSN 655 with any questions.

Notice: The current AET&E Policy and Procedures dated November 2002 and posted to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center Web site at time of announcement release is outdated and being revised.